**Trope: Celeb AU (Spacedogs AU)**

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# Trope: Celeb AU (Spacedogs AU)

by TigerPrawn

Summary

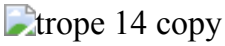
Nigel Lupescu is a famous actor - he's the bad alpha of the movie industry, linked to a different leading omega every month. He's making it big in Hollywood and nothing is going to derail that! But then Adam Raki is brought in as a consultant on set and… DAMN! The only problem is that they are both alphas and Nigel is so far in the closet he's practically in Narnia. Nigel is terrified that his sexuality might be uncovered and how it will affect his career. But is he willing to risk it for a shot at love?

Notes

For both SpacedogsSummer and SummertimeSlick (Requited Love)

Just by weird timing I happened to be writing two fics with closeted Nigel, but they are quite different and I hope you all enjoy them both! The other is non-A/B/O soul mates fic Doubt The Sun.

# Chapter 1



“Sure, sure.” Nigel Lupescu waved his hand dismissively at the production assistant and walked back across the set. They’d had some hold up with the new onset consultant and the assistant had looked nervous telling him.

Nigel knew the reputation he had, but he wasn’t the asshole he was rumoured to be. He just hated bullshit. He just wanted to do his job. A genuine problem? Fine. Some primadonna co-star demanding coffee? He was less tolerant of that sort of time wasting.

He’d been in the business a long time, seen a lot of bullshit and had less and less time for it as his career took off. Now he was arguably at the top of his game - starring roles, headlining blockbusters. Even so, he fondly remembered the days of independent cinema and cheap productions back in Romania. Things had been easier back then in many ways.

“No. That… that wouldn’t happen. I’m trying to tell you. That isn’t how gravity works.” A frustrated tone carried over the set and made Nigel turn.

The consultant. Some expert on space. Which was a joke really. The film was a science-fiction, not science fact. But the producer had insisted and was regretting it. This was the second day production had been held up, but he’d made his bed and needed to lie in it.

He’d heard about the day before but Nigel hadn’t been on set for that - this was the first time Nigel had actually glimpsed the consultant and the sight stopped him in his tracks.

*Damn!*

Physically, the guy was just his type. Gorgeous, curly haired, sparkling blue-eyed alpha.

But this wasn’t the time or the place to be attracted to someone. That was something he was always cautious about. He wasn’t naive, he knew the damage it would do his career if he came out. Really he should head back to his trailer as he had planned, and yet he found himself wandering casually back to the set and listening to the heated discussion about how the water in this zero-G shower scene were proving problematic.

He listened to the conversation as he approached, the passion the consultant showed was more of a turn on that it had any right to be. Even as he grew exasperated by Derek from the production team, who currently just seemed puzzled by how science actually worked-

“So, what you’re saying is that the water will have to-”

Nigel laughed and cut the man off. “What he’s saying Derek, is that you don’t understand shit about water in space.”

The consultant turned to him and looked annoyed. “That wasn’t what I was saying at all. Who are you?”

Nigel grinned. It wasn’t often people didn’t know who he was - maybe the guy just didn’t place him?

“Darling, I’m Nigel Lupescu.” He crooned.

He was met with a continued and confused look from the consultant and a raised brow from Derek as he continued to flash a grin.

*Shit!*

He reigned his grin back and cursed himself for being caught in the moment. The last thing he needed was to start rumours over his sexuality. It had been too easy to slip into flirting mode with this guy and usually Nigel saved that for the omega’s - for appearances. But the first person to not fawn over him in a number of years had only made the alpha more attractive.

*Time to go Nigel.*

“Well. I better go prepare myself for the shower scene, when you lot are ready to let us crack on with it. Don’t want to disappoint Gabi and have it cancelled for the day, I know she was looking forward to it.” He grinned and winked and felt like a fucking pig talking about his co-star and female lead that way. But Derek grinned and nodded.

The consultant said nothing. Did nothing.

Nigel gave a curt nod and walked away.

*

Filming had been arduous.

No one could fucking agree with how water would move in zero-G. Or rather how it would move in reality versus how the director actually wanted it to look. It resulted in 7 hours of he and Gabi Ibanescu standing around, damp and in modesty underwear and towels, constantly having scenes cut and reset.

“Goddam!” Gabi snatched her towel from a crew member when the scene was cut again. “I cannot take this any more!” The omega shivered in her towel. “This scene is 5 minutes long, we are not shooting a porno for crying out loud. We have spent the whole day on this?”

“Hey look, the consultant says-” Derek started and all eyes turned to the consultant who looked as tired and worn as everyone else and interrupted him with-

“That what you want is not scientifically accurate.”

Gabi threw up her hands in exasperation and stormed off the set.

“Ok, I’m calling it for today guys.”

People started to disperse and reset the scene. Nigel just stood and watched the alpha with a strange fascination. Every time he had spoken up on set that day it had been so to the point and factual and it felt like there was a real disconnect happening somewhere. This guy was gonna cost them a lot of money in lost time, and this was just the fucking shower scene. God only knows what he would have to say about the bit with the spacewalk or where they blew up the asteroid to save earth.

Nigel wrapped his towel around his waist and walked over to the man just as Derek was walking off, looking fraught.

“You know a lot about science and space huh?” Nigel asked as an opener.

“Of course, that’s why I’m here. Why I am consulting. But…” he let out an exasperated sigh - those seemed to be going around. “No one seems to understand what I am telling them. Am I explaining it wrong?”

Nigel was taken aback by the question and the vulnerability. By the lack of posturing. This guy was clearly an alpha, not just his fucking glorious scent, but it exuded out of him in many ways. Yet it was like he lacked any kind of the normal bullshit that alphas liked to throw around. Fuck, was that refreshing.

Nigel cleared his throat. “I think they understand, gorgeous. It just isn’t what they want to hear.”

“I don’t understand. Why would they hire me and not want to hear what I say?” He looked off to the side and Nigel was suddenly struck by the fact that this guy barely made eye contact with anyone.

Nigel chuckled. “Have you ever done this before?”

“Yes of course. I’ve worked on many films…” he started to list them off on his fingers “The Wonders of the Milky Way, The Stars At Night, The Mars Question, A Guide To The Universe… that one was for high schools, The-”

“Woah, ok.” Nigel raised his hands for the man to stop. “They all sound… sciencey. Have you ever worked on a fiction movie before?”

The consultant shook his head and frowned.

“Okay darling, well they don’t want to know the science fact. They want it to be science fiction… but realistic enough not to look stupid to the audience.” Nigel offered.

The consultant seemed to consider this for a moment and then realisation dawned and his mouth formed into a little circle. He let out a delicate “oh” that pulled something tight within Nigel from his chest to his balls.

“Well, why didn’t they just explain that?” The consultant smiled and his eyes found Nigel’s for the first time.

And fuck they were something else. They were like space. Large and blue and sparkling.

Nigel could barely manage a shrug. He cleared his throat again, adjusted his towel in hopes that the throb he just felt in his knot wasn't going to be too obvious and then gave a curt nod.

"Nigel." The consultant said before he could move away. "Are… you attracted to me?"

"What? What the fuck? No, what, I-" Nigel blustered, somewhere between anxious and angry. At himself mostly.

"Oh. okay. You just kept calling me pet names and I thought that is what people do when they are interested in another person." Adam smiled, but his eyes were faraway again. "I… I'm trying to learn people. Everyone is very different."

The kid sounded like a damn alien. Nigel just nodded. He wanted to know more about that, wanted to know more about the consultant and even fucking space. But there was no way he was going to risk his reputation on a pair of beautiful fucking eyes.

"It's a shame." The consultant added with a shrug. "I'm very attracted to you." It was said so matter of factly that Nigel couldn't even react. The other alpha started to wander off, leaving Nigel stood damp, in a towel, on a near empty set with his cock stirring.

*

Nigel avoided Adam Raki - as he turned out to be called.

When Adam Raki was on set Nigel tried not to be. He became one of those awkward assholes that he hated. But it was easier to avoid him and not have to deal with it.

He had plenty of experience dealing with his own interest, but knowing someone was interested back was different. Especially at work - he just couldn't risk it. He'd seen what had happened to others in this position. Sure it was when he was new in the business and things had changed a little since then, but it really wasn't worth the risk to his livelihood.

The risk wasn't worth it because it wasn't like he was going to come out. Which meant he definitely shouldn't hook up with someone from work. He had resolved himself long ago to the fact that he would never be in a proper relationship - no one ever wanted to stay secret. Hell, he didn't want to but it was his choice and his problem, not anyone elses to have to deal with. A fling was the best he could hope for and that was a big no go as far as hooking up with someone in the industry was concerned. Definitely not worth the risk for a quick rough and tumble.

Nigel sighed as he saw Adam across the set.

He resolved himself and started over. Today they were starting to shoot the spacewalk scenes and so there was definitely no avoiding the consultant.

He was engaged in a deep discussion with Derek as Nigel walked over, and yet Adam looked up upon scenting him and smiled.

And goddamn that smile!

Nigel held back the anguished noise he could feel rising in his throat.

“Hello Nigel. I watched some of your movies.” Adam told him with no preamble. Perhaps Derek was used to the consultant’s seemingly quirky ways as he just wandered off, leaving the two of them alone on the side of the moonscape set.

“Oh. Okay. Hi. And um…” Nigel stumbled over the words, caught off guard and still thrown by the ridiculously amazing smile the alpha had given him. “I… uh, hoped you liked the movies.”

“Not very much.” Adam replied. “I didn’t find them very enjoyable.”

Nigel stared blankly for a moment, wondering if it was a joke. The look in a flash of eye contact told him it wasn’t.

“Wow.” Nigel actually found himself awed by the alpha. So matter of fact, so blunt. So unlike anyone in his life!

“Is this one of those situations where you didn’t want the truth you wanted platitudes and I should have lied instead?” Adam asked, frowning.

Nigel chuckled. “It might have been polite, yeah. But to be fair, I’m so used to being bullshitted, it’s refreshing to hear your point of view. I like it.” Nigel found himself grinning and his chest swelling. He knew he’d crooned out the words and he was *so* close to sliding easily into flirtation again.

On this occasion he resisted.

On others, he was unable.

It was like Adam fucking Raki drew it out of him. He still tried to avoid him, but it was impossible - unless he wanted to quit the film, which seemed pointless really. When they spoke together alone at the edge of the set, Nigel found himself flirting easily.

Once or twice he drew a small smile, but started to wonder if that was merely coincidence given that Adam seemed otherwise oblivious to the flirting. It made Nigel want to try harder but he at least restrained himself there.

He could convince himself this was fun, silly flirtation and nothing more. He could ignore how much he enjoyed talking with Adam and had even looked up some of the movies he’d worked on too - all documentaries and some fucking mind blowing. A friendship, that’s all this was and surely all other people on set would see, if he schooled himself to be as careful as possible. To snatch back his hands in those moments when he wanted to place it lightly on the other alpha’s arm as they laughed together. To reign in that smile that threatened to reveal him.

Adam had a quirky sort of humour that, much like everything else about him, was refreshing and exciting to Nigel. It had been so long since he had been around anyone that felt this

genuine. It only made him feel all the shittier for not being genuine himself - for hiding so much of himself, even if it was for the sake of his career.

*

They were 6 weeks into filming, not many more until they would wrap. And other than the unlikely chance of them both being called back to work on a reshoot of a scene together, their time was limited. It was counting down and Nigel hated that.

That was why, when he was driving off the lot for the weekend and saw Adam walking down the street to the bus stop, he pulled his convertible over.

“Hey Adam. Going my way?” He joked with a grin.

Adam stopped next to the car and frowned at him. “I… don’t know what way you are going?”

Nigel leaned over and opened the passenger door, letting it swing open, though Adam still stood on the sidewalk.

“I meant, can I give you a ride home?” Nigel asked.

Adam’s frown eased. “I don’t think I live in the same direction as you. You’re not going my way.”

There was the faintest hint of a smile playing across Adam’s lips that let Nigel know he was joking - turning his awkward ways around in acknowledgement. Nigel grinned.

“Get in Adam. I will drive you anywhere you want to go.”

Adam got into the car and shut the door. He frowned again for a moment before turning to Nigel, soft eyes finding his.

“Anywhere?” He asked. Nigel nodded, a frown of his own creasing his brow. “I… I want to go to your house.”

“What?” Nigel’s heart was suddenly racing and his palms sweaty against the steering wheel.

“I think you’ve been flirting with me? It’s hard to tell so I asked my friend Harlan. I described what you say and do and he said ‘hell yeah, that guy has it bad for you!’” Adam looked suddenly nervous. “Do you? Was Harlan wrong? I am still very attracted to you and I wondered-”

“Fuuuuck.” Nigel let out the word as a groan. “I can’t… Adam, I… I can’t take you home with me.” He realised in that moment what a fucking idiot he was being. What had possessed him to offer the guy a lift? Had he thought they would just talk and laugh some more? Had he thought that would have been enough for him?

“You aren’t attracted to me? You haven’t been flirting with me?”

“Shit, no. I mean, yes. Yes to both of those things. But I’m an asshole Adam, I didn’t… I didn’t mean to lead you on.” Nigel was very conscious of being parked at the kerb and started to hope that no one else from the studio would leave and see them together like this.

“I don’t understand.” Adam was frowning again and Nigel hated that he caused that expression on the guy.

“I… I can’t have people know.” Nigel muttered vaguely. Not entirely sure himself what exactly he was referring to in that moment.

“That you like other alphas or that you want to take me home?” Adam asked, his frown easing as he started to pick the conversation apart. And really he was dead on the money.

“I can’t have people find out. If I take you home - to your place, mine is too… people will know.” Nigel’s heart was beating so fast he felt like he might break a rib. Was he really fucking doing this?

“My house is actually very secluded, it has a great view of the stars on a clear night. You are welcome to come and see.” Adam smiled.

“I think I’d like that.” Nigel replied.

*

The house *was* secluded, up one of those long wooded drives, in the hills. It wasn’t a lavish place, but comfortable. Nigel liked it. It was a far cry from the stone and marble villa-style mansion he owned. He wasn’t even sure he liked the damn place, it was just somewhere to be and keep up appearances.

This though, it felt like a home. It had personality in a weird sort of way. It wasn’t cluttered but there were memories here - framed childhood photos, books, a telescope in pieces on the table. It made Nigel smile.

“I… I’m waiting for a part to arrive. It seems silly to put it back together before it arrives, but…” Adam seemed agitated and as though he was trying not to look at the tidiest ‘mess’ Nigel had ever seen. Adam took a breath and turned to Nigel, fleeting eye contact. “I’m nervous. Do you feel nervous?”

Nigel clenched and unclenched his sweaty palms. He damn well did feel nervous though he wasn’t sure why the fuck that could be. It wasn’t like he hadn’t fucked other alphas before, even since he’d found stardom. He was just discreet about it, and this was discreet. So why would he be nervous?

Maybe it was the vibe - and the rich scent - the other alpha was giving off.

“Have you… done this before?” Nigel asked, avoiding answering Adam’s question.

Adam cocked his head. “This? I’ve had sex many times, and I have brought alphas home with me before or gone to their homes. I… I like sex, so sometimes I go to a nice club that I like and-” he shrugged.

Nigel knew exactly *and what*. He wished he had the fucking freedom to go to pick up bars and fuck who the hell he liked.

Adam shifted from foot to foot and Nigel wondered if it was a sign of the nervousness he'd mentioned. But then, he realised it was actually impatience as Adam said - "I'm sexually excited. Can we have sex now?"

Weeks of conversation and Nigel thought that he was used to Adam's blunt and honest way of talking. In fact he fucking loved it, it was nice not to be bullshited. He was pretty sure the day that Adam told him he didn't like his movies, Nigel had maybe fallen a little bit in-

*Fuck.*

His heart thudded heavily and he wiped his sweaty palms on his shirt.

"I… Yeah…" Nigel was unsure how to answer, he just knew he was happy to agree.

Adam smiled and took hold of his hand, clasping it gently and giving it a little tug before starting off and taking Nigel with him.

*

The morning light streamed through the window, not directly on the bed but close enough to make everything glow.

Nigel wasn't sure how long he lay there just watching Adam sleep as the air around them seemed filled with little particles dancing in the light. It was fucking beautiful. Adam Raki was fucking beautiful and Nigel knew he was in trouble.

They had started slow - kissing, touching. And then Adam had whimpered and told Nigel he really needed to knot him. Nigel had damn near cum in his pants at the words. But luckily they were both able to strip without cumming, and Adam even did a fair job of lubing and stretching him. Not quite enough though - it had been rough and fucking delicious. Adam was experienced enough to know how to give Nigel pleasure as well as take his own, but he was impatient. Nigel thought maybe next time he'd put in a plug first - take the edge off of some of that impatience.

*Next time.*

This was bad. A very bad idea.

Just because this alpha was cute and funny in his own way - interesting, talented, seemed to like Nigel for some damn reason - it didn't mean anything. It didn't *have* to mean something. It could just be sex. And just this once, no next time. Too risky. Just too fucking risky. It always was.

Even as he made that resolution his mind raced through the night before - hours of fucking, sucking, licking and... Adam's eyes fluttered open.

Adam looked him dead in the eyes and smiled. "Good morning Nigel."

He was right. It was a really fucking good morning.

# Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

A time jump, some angst and a happy fucking ending.

**Three Months Later**

“Say it.” Nigel moaned.

“You want me to use curse words?”

“Fuck yeah baby.”

“Ok… Nigel, I really want to fuck you.”

Nigel groaned at the words and then even deeper into a guttural snarl as Adam pulled the plug out of him and wasted no time in replacing it with his cock. Nigel felt the artificial slick he’d pushed inside himself leaking down the back of his thighs and shuddered.

“Oh darling, you always knot me so good.” Nigel moaned out the words as he pushed his face to the pillow, loving the feel of Adam pressing him to the mattress like a good alpha should.

Three months since they had started seeing each other and the way Adam fucked wasn’t the only thing Nigel loved about him.

In fact, it hadn’t taken him that long at all to realise that he was falling for Adam in a big way. A way that meant his original suggestion, after their first time, of friends with benefits quickly developed into more. He practically lived with Adam half the time and he knew he was even getting a little careless. But it was so easy to forget how forbidden this was to him when it felt so good.

Adam felt so good.

He moaned again and then his breath hitched as Adam angled at his prostate. The kid could fuck like a pro - he really did love sex and had practically made a sport of it. Which Nigel couldn’t complain about one bit.

Adam’s hands were splayed on his hips as he thrust deep and hard, the motion pushing Nigel forward each time as they both let out little grunts of pleasure.

“You like it when I cum on your knot baby.” Nigel said - it was a truth for both of them. Nigel had never cum untouched before he met Adam, and never ceased to marvel at it.

“Yes.” Adam agreed breathily, as Nigel looked back over his shoulder to see him biting his lower lip.

*So fucking hot!*

His cock was aching already and he knew he couldn’t even dare touch it. He wouldn’t need to. The second Adam knotted him it would be all over.

Nigel grunted and pushed back as he felt Adam’s knot swelling on each thrust. He met each movement, encouraging Adam to push forward - which he did. Adam’s knot started to fill Nigel before it was even fully engorged. It was easier this way sure, but it was much fucking nicer too. To feel that pleasurable burn and impossible fullness. Better to have the knot worked in and then swell, instead of pushing it in once it was almost impossible. Sure that could be fun too, and Adam had taken him pretty rough a couple of times, but this they both liked best - regardless of who was knotting who.

Invariably Adam knotted him. And he fucking loved it.

The thought had his dick jerking up against him and he desperately wanted to lower himself to the bed for friction, but he knew there was no point. One more hard thrust and Adam was fully inside him and rapidly inflating. They both groaned as Adam made shallow little thrusts that barely moved his hips, as his knot tied them together.

They came together, the sensation so overwhelming to them both. Nigel shot hot ropes of cum up the sheets beneath him as he felt Adam jerk inside him - his knot giving one last final tease of Nigel’s prostate. Adam was cumming hard then and continued to cum through Nigel’s orgasm - filling him with his seed as they both spasmed and panted. It was a good couple of minutes before their bodies began to calm and they collapsed to the bed, panting.

Adam whined as Nigel’s movement squeezed him impossibly tight.

*

They ate breakfast - like a couple - at Adam’s breakfast bar. Though of course it was technically brunch given that they had fucked through half of the morning. But considering it was their first day off together for a while, Nigel was surprised they’d even got out of bed at all.

But breakfast was necessary and already had Adam a little on edge for the lateness of it - the autism, Nigel understood. He was at least calmed a little by the two orgasms he’d had that morning - once when Nigel sucked his dick and then when he’d practically fucked Nigel through the mattress. Those kind of good times really helped chill him out. Both of them really. It sure helped Nigel forget that he was in the fucking closet.

As did this casual domesticity that had grown up between them over the weeks they had been seeing each other.

“I can stay all day and night.” Nigel marvelled happily with a mouthful of food. He breathed deeply, able to take in the scent of sex and Adam over the breakfast.

Adam smiled back at him as he chewed as well.

When Adam swallowed he said -"You could stay forever if you like. I don't mind."

Nigel felt something inside drop and rise at the same time. The thought of staying forever, never leaving this house, never leaving Adam - it was tantalising. But it wasn't realistic. It wasn't going to happen. He should break this off before they were both irreparably hurt by it.

He scrubbed a hand roughly over his face and his heart ached as Adam's smile fell away and he looked down at his food. "I can't darling. You know I can't."

"I don't know that." Adam replied with a little venom, taking Nigel aback with the anger and hurt in the words. They had danced around this so many times and Adam had never spoken up like this before. It made Nigel's heart stop for a beat.

"Adam… my career-"

"Is more important to you than me."

*Fuck.*

"It's not that simple." Nigel said quietly, his palms sweaty as he ached at how fucked up those words were.

"I don't understand why you hide this when it makes you miserable. You are so happy when you are with me, as happy as I am to be with you. And then you work and you are miserable and…" Adam ran out of steam and his face was full of confusion. He was straight forward. He was *out* because he never understood why people should hide anything about themselves.

He'd told Nigel once that hiding being attracted to alphas would be like him trying to hide his autism. And why would he do that? It is part of him even if people didn't like it or were nasty to him for it. Nigel had fucking cried about that when he got home. Curled up in a ball in his big, cold fucking mansion and cried.

He wanted to cry now.

"I.." he tried to find the words to explain it. The idea that Adam thought he cared more about his career than him hurt. He loved Adam more than his job.

*He loved Adam.*

"It isn't that fucking easy." Nigel found the words bursting out with anger. Defensive, he knew. Trying to protect himself and Adam, trying to push Adam away.

Adam flinched at his raised voice and that did it. That broke his fucking heart.

Nigel stood. Torn. He wanted to take hold of Adam and comfort him. He wanted to run away and forget all about this. Forget all about Adam fucking Raki and the love he brought into his life. He clenched his jaw and tried to resolve the warring thoughts and emotions.

When Adam looked up at him sadly he knew it was over. Why should Adam have to deal with this? If he loved him he'd let him go. And he fucking loved Adam. He was just happy he hadn't made things worse by ever saying that out loud.

Nigel turned and stalked out of the house, closing the door behind him and not stopping to even think or breath until he got in his car and peeled out of the driveway.

*

Nigel was late on set pretty much every day after that, but one look at him and no one had the nerve to say anything, not even any of the other alphas. He knew he looked like shit - Joe in makeup huffed at him but said nothing as their usual routine took an hour longer at least.

Even the beta from continuity had come to his trailer and sheepishly told him he needed to shave as his stubble would fuck up the continuity.

It was still a couple of weeks before this movie wrapped and then he had no immediate plans. Maybe a bit of a break before he picked up and flicked through some of the scripts his agent had sent him. He just had to get through it. On his own, as always.

Gabi cleared her throat and he looked up to see her standing in the doorway of his trailer.

"Hey gorgeous." He greeted her but the smile barely reached the corners of his mouth much less his eyes.

"Fuck. Nigel… Did someone die?" She looked genuinely concerned and she came in and shut the door behind her.

He knew Gabi was filming some period piece on the same lot, that had only just started shooting - this was the first he'd seen of her. He counted her as a friend really and yet-

He swallowed down everything he wanted to say.

*Only my fucking heart.*

She looked at him with unguarded sympathy and took a seat opposite him on the couch.

"Anything I can do to help?" She asked and put a hand on his knee. It took everything in him not to flinch away and even so he knew he winced a little. She narrowed her eyes.

"I'm fine." He said quickly.

She nodded slowly, scrutinising him. "Uhuh… ok, so does this alpha have a name? The one who has broken your heart?" she asked quietly.

His blood ran cold and he did move then, her hand left floating where his knee had been as he straightened in the chair. She settled it in her own lap, took in a deep breath and let out a heavy sigh.

“It’s ok. No one knows. I mean… I think some suspect. No one would ever say anything. I had wondered about it for a while. And then when we were working together a few months ago with that, um, Adam? Was that his name? There was such a spark between you I just… I figured maybe my hunch was right?”

Nigel nodded slowly. “His name was Adam.”

Gabi opened and closed her mouth wordlessly.

“What can I do to help?” She finally asked, clearly upset by the pain he was in.

*

He was hiding - he knew. He was a shit. He was an asshole and a coward.

Nigel smiled at the flashing cameras. Putting on a show. Keeping up appearances.

Gabi laughed on his arm at something one of the photographers shouted to get her attention. Nigel didn’t hear it. Barely heard the tinkle of her laughter as he tried to get through this on autopilot.

He was such a fucking coward.

“Nigel, Nigel!” A hand up in the crowd as one of the reporters tried to get their attention as the flashes stopped and they were allowed to continue down the red carpet for the charity gala. “Nigel, rumours have linked you to Gabi for a while now. Are you two finally making it official?”

Nigel’s face hurt from the fake smile as he nodded. Gabi squeezed his arm.

What kind of asshole was he for dragging her into this? She had offered. She was his friend and wanted to help him. She wanted to help keep his secret and if that meant being his beard for a couple of months she was more than willing. What the fuck did he do to deserve that loyalty and friendship? He wasn’t sure. He felt like a fucking monster.

“We’re very happy.” Gabi was telling another reporter. Nigel had missed the question but he nodded again. He wasn’t sure he could open his mouth - a scream was likely to burst out as much as any words.

The red carpet took them inside. They attended the gala. He tried to enjoy her company, but this was a different Gabi. This wasn’t the friend he had liked spending time with. This was the fake Gabi who hung off his arm and planted kisses on his cheek at strategic moments - usually when the cameras were on them.

*Hollywood’s new power couple.*

The thought made him sick.

And he was. As soon as he got home that night. He didn’t switch on the lights, just went inside and vomited the little of the fancy dinner he had picked at all over the polished atrium

floor.

He sunk to his knees and cried.

*

It had been two months since he walked out on Adam. They'd had no contact since.

This thing with Gabi was working as far as everyone was concerned. Gabi came over a lot, they hung out. He even opened up to her about everything - his sexuality, Adam. She clearly wanted to encourage him to be himself, but held her tongue. She knew better from his story of Adam. If wasn't going to come out for the alpha he loved, there was little she could say or do.

She left late, after dinner. He put her in a cab and carried on drinking. And drinking.

He passed out on the floor of the living room. He'd lost count of how many times he'd done this now.

When he woke up the sun was streaming in through the patio doors and a cool breeze was wafting over him.

"Nigel?"

He wondered if he imagined the beautiful voice.

*Adam.*

He groaned as he tried to roll to his side. He needed to get up and pull himself together and not keep thinking about how he'd fucked everything up. He'd made his bed and he was always going to lie in it. He was always going to lie.

"Are you ok?" There was a gentle hand on his shoulder then and Nigel stilled.

It took effort to turn and look without vomiting, but there - haloed by the fucking morning sun - was Adam Raki.

"What are you doing here?" It came out resigned. Helpless.

"You called me. You were drunk." Adam pointed at the phone on the floor. "I only got the voicemail this morning and I… I was worried. So I came over. The patio doors were unlocked." He stopped and looked around, taking in the house - Nigel had never brought him here. "This is nice. I can understand why you like this more than me."

The fact that he knew Adam completely meant the words sent a stab of pain right through his fucking heart.

Was that the truth of it? If he lost his career over his sexuality and never worked again, was that what it came down to? That he'd rather have things and the pretense of happiness surrounded by a life he wasn't even happy in?

“Would you like me to call Gabi for you?” Adam asked, looking concerned and completely sincere. “I… saw you are a couple now and I… Perhaps you need her to come help you?”

Adam shifted from foot to foot.

No he didn’t fucking need Gabi. Only… he did, didn’t he? Needed the coverup.

Nigel sighed and it hurt and made him feel nauseous. He struggled up onto the plush white leather sofa and sank into it. Adam just continued to watch him.

“I missed you.” Adam finally said. Nigel’s jaw tightened. “I was worried when I got your voicemail, but you seem ok. Shall I get you a glass of water? And then I will go.”

He didn’t remember calling Adam. He had wanted to call him so many times, go see him, kiss him, collapse on the bed with him and cry.

Nigel just nodded.

Adam nodded in return and looked around before spotting the kitchen door across the large open plan room. Nigel dozed in and out of reality until he returned with a glass of water and put it in Nigel’s hand.

The brush of Adam’s skin against his own threatened to pull a sob from him, but he held back.

“I should go.” Adam said. Nigel nodded.

*

Nigel grit his teeth at the faint knock on his trailer door. Only a few days filming left. He just wanted to get the fuck through it and take a break. Maybe go away somewhere - a beach. Just to fucking sizzle in the sun and drown his sorrows in cocktails. He’d have to take Gabi of course.

His stomach lurched.

There was another knock.

“Come the fuck in already.” He growled.

The door opened tentatively and Adam Raki’s wide-eyed expressed appeared.

“I… can come back? I didn’t mean to bother you. I am on this set today and I saw your trailer. I… wanted to say hello. I miss you.”

His bluntness stopped Adam from holding back the words that Nigel really didn’t want to hear. And even so.

He moved to the door and pulled Adam in, closing it behind him as he pulled Adam to him and kissed him like his life depended on it.

Maybe it did.

When they broke apart, panting a few minutes later Adam was smiling. Nigel tried to return it but he couldn't. He was an asshole. He had kissed Adam because he wanted it and was tired of fighting it, but nothing had changed.

"What about Gabi?" Adam asked.

Nigel pulled away. "I shouldn't have done that. I'm sorry."

Adam frowned at him. "Is Gabi… she is just a lie isn't she?"

Nigel clenched his jaw but nodded when Adam's eyes met his.

Adam looked angry and sad and hurt all at once. "That's very unfair Nigel. Poor Gabi."

Nigel wanted to laugh but didn't because Adam was fucking right. How many other people's lives was he going to ruin?

"I miss you." Adam said again.

"I miss you too." He had to admit even though it hurt his chest to do so.

Adam looked thoughtful for a moment. "Maybe it could be a secret. I… I don't like lying about it but I understand why you think you have to. But I'm angry at you about Gabi - she seems nice and deserves better."

Nigel's heart felt like it was breaking. He wanted Adam so much. He loved him so fucking much, and this was breaking his heart.

"I don't want you to ever have to hide who you are, Adam. It would be fucking terrible of me to ask."

"You didn't ask. I offered. I… I miss you." He said again, this time he looked desperately sad, maybe even worried Nigel was going to say no.

Nigel shook his head. "It wouldn't work. We'd start to hate each other. I don't want to hate you."

"Because you love me." Adam nodded as some sort of agreement.

"What?" Nigel's chest went tight.

"I can see that Nigel, in the way we were together and in the way you hurt now. In your actions. Or… am I interpreting it wrong?" He looked worried again and started to fidget as he looked over Nigel's shoulder at nothing in particular.

"You're not wrong." Nigel admitted. "But it doesn't matter."

Nigel felt everything in him turn to stone.

“It does matter, because… I love you too. I want to be with you and make you happy. You are so unhappy Nigel. Um… Harlan says money can’t buy happiness.” There was frustration and anger in his tone.

“You love me too.” Nigel repeated and fucking hated himself.

“I love you.” Adam repeated. “I want you to be happy.”

“I want you to be happy and that means not having me in your fucking life.” Nigel growled quietly.

“No Nigel.” Adam snapped. “You… You are the best thing in my life since my dad died! You are better than any job or friends or… you’re better than the stars. You make me happy and if I can only have a secret part of you I want it. Because I can be selfish too.”

A sob escaped from Nigel and he sank to his knees. He felt broken. What was he fucking doing to this beautiful, wonderful creature?

Adam moved forward and then hesitated, and then moved forward again until he pulled Nigel to him so that Nigel was hugging around his waist. Nigel sobbed against him and shook in the awkward embrace.

“I can’t…” Nigel realised. He really couldn’t. “I can’t live like that and I can’t ask you to either.”

Adam went rigid. “I understand.”

He looked up at Adam, his soft eyes full of crushed hope. He wanted to make it all better, he wanted to be the alpha Adam deserved him to be, the alpha Adam had been for him. He just wasn’t sure he could do it.

His heart was racing as he pulled Adam back towards him, nuzzling at his crotch and taking in the scent there. He had missed it, he had missed Adam and that scent that was wholly him. Clean and musky at once, so very alpha, so very Adam.

“Nigel?” Adam asked and Nigel knew he was biting his lower lip as he started to harden against Nigel. “Do you want to have sex?”

“I fucking do darling, I really fucking do.”

His heart was racing but he had to do this. For Adam fucking Raki and all the other people in his life that deserved better.

He took hold of one of Adam’s hands and pulled him out of the trailer, marching across the lot with him until they were at the corner of a set. Victorian or something like that. Gabi was stood there in a bonnet and big dress. They caught her eye and she stopped talking, stopped acting and grinned.

“Cut.” The director called. “Head in the game Gabi!”

She shot the director a dark look before turning back to Nigel, his hand firmly clasping Adam's, and blew them a kiss.

Nigel fucking laughed. What he didn't fucking owe that woman.

"Nigel?" Adam was confused but smiling. He smiled back, the first genuine fucking smile he'd had on his face in months. The first one that didn't hurt.

He wrapped an arm around Adam's shoulders and walked back across the lot to his car. They got in and Nigel lowered the roof despite the slight threat of rain. What the fuck did it matter?

The tires screeched as he turned in the lot and towards the exit. As the studio gates opened the usual few hopeful paparazzi were gathered, looking bored. When they saw the car and recognised Nigel they sprung into action. Well… he was about to make their fucking day.

He pulled the car to a stop as the gates started to close behind them and turned to Adam.

"I fucking love you Adam Raki. You are worth whatever happens next."

Adam was smiling at him as he grabbed his shirt and pulled him closer. Their lips met gently at first, then Adam swallowed his moan and deepened the kiss. Yes he wanted to have sex with Adam Raki, in his own fucking home, not in hiding, not in secret. He wanted to do that every day forever without being worried that people would find out.

If they already knew…

Because Adam would be the greater loss. Fuck his career. Maybe he wouldn't get the same roles, maybe he'd never work again. He'd sell the mansion - live in Adam's secluded little home and eek out the money until he found something else. Anything else. As long as he had Adam.

There was a moment of stunned silence before the cameras started to go off around them, shouts of "Nigel what about Gabi?" "Who is this?"

A scent was caught.

"Is this man an alpha?" The question seemed to fall out of a stunned mouth.

There was silence then other than the odd click, as the photographers all looked at the one of them who had scented it. They looked frantic, they all scrambled to get another shot of the two of them as Nigel pulled back and stroked his thumb lovingly over Adam's bottom lip.

What a fucking exclusive for them all.

Nigel started the engine again and then turned to the paparazzi.

"Yes he fucking is. And I fucking love him." He grinned.

His heart was racing as he drove, Adam's hand moved comfortingly to his thigh. What *had* he done? What the fuck had he just done?

He looked over at Adam. A smile. He knew the alpha well enough to see everything there - his own love and lust and happiness reflected.

*He'd done the right fucking thing. He'd fallen in love with Adam fucking Raki.*

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